(c) Steps taken by the Government to combat militancy in the North East include, interalia, deployment of Central Para Military Force and Army; improved coordination and sharing of intelligence between the security forces; modernisation/upgradation of State Police forces; reimbursement of security related expenditure; sanction of Special Central Assistance to the State Governments; declaration of the most seriously affected areas as "disturbed areas' and notification of the major insurgent groups as unlawful associations'. The situation is also kept under watch and is reviewed from time to time for taking appropriate action. Government is committed to restoration of peace and has extended an invitation to all those who have strayed from the paths of togetherness to come forward for talks within the four corners of our Constitution.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Two Battalions of CPMF have been deployed in the State to assist the State Police to tackle the criminal activities of various groups, including ANVC and NSCN, in Meghalaya. The State Government have also been directed to take stringent action against all such criminal elements.

Arrest of foreign ladies at Thiruvananthapuram Airport

2163. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about the arrest of eight Non- Indian girls at Thiruvananthapuram airport while producing fake papers;

(b) whether it is a fact that they ran away from Abala Mandiram of Pujapura;

(c) whether any investigation has been made; and

(d) if so, what are the findings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) to (d) As per available information, on 09-11-1999, eight foreign women arrived at Thiruvananthapuram Airport from Istanbul as deportees holding forged Japanese passports, and were arrested and a case was registered against them by the State Police. They escaped from Government Mahila Mandiram on 26-12-1999 but were located and detained by the Police in Thirunalveli District, Tamil Nadu on the same day. Again a case was registered and they were produced before the Court in Thiruvananthapuram which remanded them to judicial custody.